



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

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Fifth District

January 9, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

On November 13, 2003, the Board adopted a motion to seek and/or support legislation that prohibits private ownership and/or restricts the sale of Mobile Infrared Transmitters (MIRTS), a traffic signal preemption device used to change the sequencing of traffic signals. **AB 340 (Frommer)**, as amended on January 5, 2004 and **SB 1085 (Murray)**, which was introduced on January 5, 2004, would prohibit the possession, distribution, and use of MIRTS by unauthorized persons.

Current law prohibits a person from using, and a vehicle from being equipped with, a device capable of sending a signal that interrupts or changes the sequence patterns of a traffic signal unless the vehicle is an authorized emergency vehicle. A violation that results in an injury is punishable by imprisonment for not more than six months and by a fine of not less than \$5,000, but not more than \$10,000. A violation that does not result in an injury is punishable by a fine of not more than \$3,000.

AB 340 (Frommer), would make it an infraction for a person to sell, offer for sale, buy, possess, manufacture, or distribute a device capable of sending a signal that interrupts or changes the sequence pattern of a traffic control signal. An infraction is a low level breach or violation of a law. The Vehicle Code establishes various fines, usually a nominal amount, for each infraction. AB 340 also makes it a misdemeanor for an unauthorized person to possess two or more such devices. A misdemeanor is a higher level breach or violation of a law and is generally punishable by a fine or incarceration or both.

SB 1085 (Murray), would make the current punishments for persons or vehicles using transmitters to change traffic light sequences applicable to persons or vehicles using MIRTS. It also makes it an infraction for a person to install, sell, or offer for sale, any

transmitting device that will change the sequence of a traffic signal. The exceptions include authorized emergency personnel and vehicles.

AB 340 is scheduled to be heard in the Assembly Transportation Committee on January 12, 2004. SB 1085 may be acted on after February 5, 2004. Neither bill has any support or opposition on record.

Consistent with Board action to support legislation to restrict MIRTTS, our Sacramento advocates will support AB 340 and SB 1085.

Status of County-Interest Legislation

County-supported SB 975 (McClintock), which would define a transportation gridlock emergency as a condition that requires extraordinary State action and authorizes the Governor to declare a state of emergency when any highway has an average daily vehicle delay that exceeds 3,000 vehicle hours per day, failed reconsideration in the Senate Committee on Transportation on January 6, 2004 and is now dead.

We will continue to keep you informed.

DEJ:GK
MAL:JF:JL:hg/n

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 Local 660
 All Department Heads
 Legislative Strategist
 Coalition of County Unions
 California Contract Cities Association
 Independent Cities Association
 League of California Cities